

## BLM's August Lease Sale

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**What:** As a part of Utah's August 16<sup>th</sup> Oil and Gas Lease Sale, BLM would like to join with its county and state government partners in communicating the important role of oil and gas leasing and development in Utah. BLM believes that state and local government can greatly assist in communicating to the public the following messages:

1. **Leasing of private, state, and federal lands is essential for exploration and discovery of new oil and natural gas reserves.** Companies will not invest in costly technologies to explore for these resources, unless they have rights to develop them if resources are found.
2. **Leasing and development on Utah's public lands has numerous economic benefits for local communities and the State of Utah.** Mineral development is a key part of the economic mix in rural communities. Royalties also fund important services on a state and local level.
3. **Energy development in Utah is being conducted responsibly.** A very small percentage of lands in Utah actually see development. Currently, less than 14 percent of Utah's public lands are under lease (approx. 4.5 million acres compared to the high of 20 million acres in the 1980s).

Regulatory agencies consider the entire mix of resources and uses in an area before leasing or permitting development. New technology minimizes surface disturbance and other impacts. Nearly 5 million acres of BLM-managed land is 'off-limits' to oil and gas development in Utah.

### Outreach Strategy:

Many of the parcels in the August Lease sale are in areas that have not seen development historically (i.e. Sevier, Iron, Beaver, and Grand counties). Recent discoveries in central Utah have shown that leasing in these areas enables companies to explore and discover new oil and gas reserves.

For this sale, BLM would like to highlight the economic impacts of leasing and development. BLM believes one of the best ways to do this is to involve the counties and the State. The outreach strategy will include the following:

1. **Press conference with State and County officials tentatively set July 28.** This opportunity would be used to draw attention to the economic benefits from oil and gas leasing and to emphasize the rationale and protections considered in BLM's decision process. The conference will be held prior to the protest period closing on July 31 so BLM and its partners will have the first opportunity to present perspectives about this lease sale.
2. **Outreach to industry media and select regional and national media outlets.** BLM hopes to have the support of communications divisions in local and state agencies to help spread and carry this positive story.

### Potential hot buttons for this sale:

BLM anticipates controversy over some parcels that will be offered. BLM plans to address the rationale for offering these parcels and the consultation with other agencies. These include parcels in the vicinity of Arches National Park. None of the parcels would be visible from key observation points in the Park. Leasing of these parcels would not permit development and additional environmental analysis would be required before any activity on the ground.

BLM will also offer parcels along the Green River. Quarter mile set backs and topography will prevent any potential development from being visible from the river.